

An Enterprise Approach to Natural Resource Monitoring



What is the Enterprise Monitoring Approach?

Oregon's natural resource agencies manage Oregon's air, water, land and wildlife resources to support a healthy environment that sustains Oregon communities, Oregon's economy, and the places Oregonians treasure. The Enterprise Monitoring approach builds on the agencies' existing collaborative monitoring efforts to achieve environmental outcomes more efficiently, cost effectively and with better results. By sharing capabilities and capacities we maximize the efficient use of state resources, information and know-how. Environmental information and data produced through enterprise monitoring will measure and guide progress toward achieving the vision described in the Governor's 10-Year Plan for Healthy Environments.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Monitoring and assessment are the foundation of effective and adaptive natural resource management and informed decision making. Monitoring programs provide the information Oregon needs in order to identify and prioritize problems, target actions where they will have the most benefit, and determine what is working and what is not. Without sufficient data Oregon runs a risk of implementing costly programs that do not produce the desired results and of being unable to produce or access information needed to permit new activity, meet regulatory requirements or achieve quality of life objectives.

Building Upon a Solid Framework

Natural resource issues cut across agency jurisdictional boundaries. For example, water quality affects aquatic life and municipal and business interests; forestry, agriculture and urban development affect water quality. Oregon's natural resources agencies have a 15 year history of working together to protect and restore Oregon's watersheds under the governance framework of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and

Watersheds. The Oregon Plan advanced cross-agency collaboration on monitoring, assessment, planning and implementation activities. These efforts have been important components of programs such the Forestry Program for Oregon, Total Maximum Daily Loads, Agricultural Water Quality Program Water Quality Management Plans and salmon recovery efforts. However, additional investments in monitoring are needed to fully implement the Governor's 10-year plan.

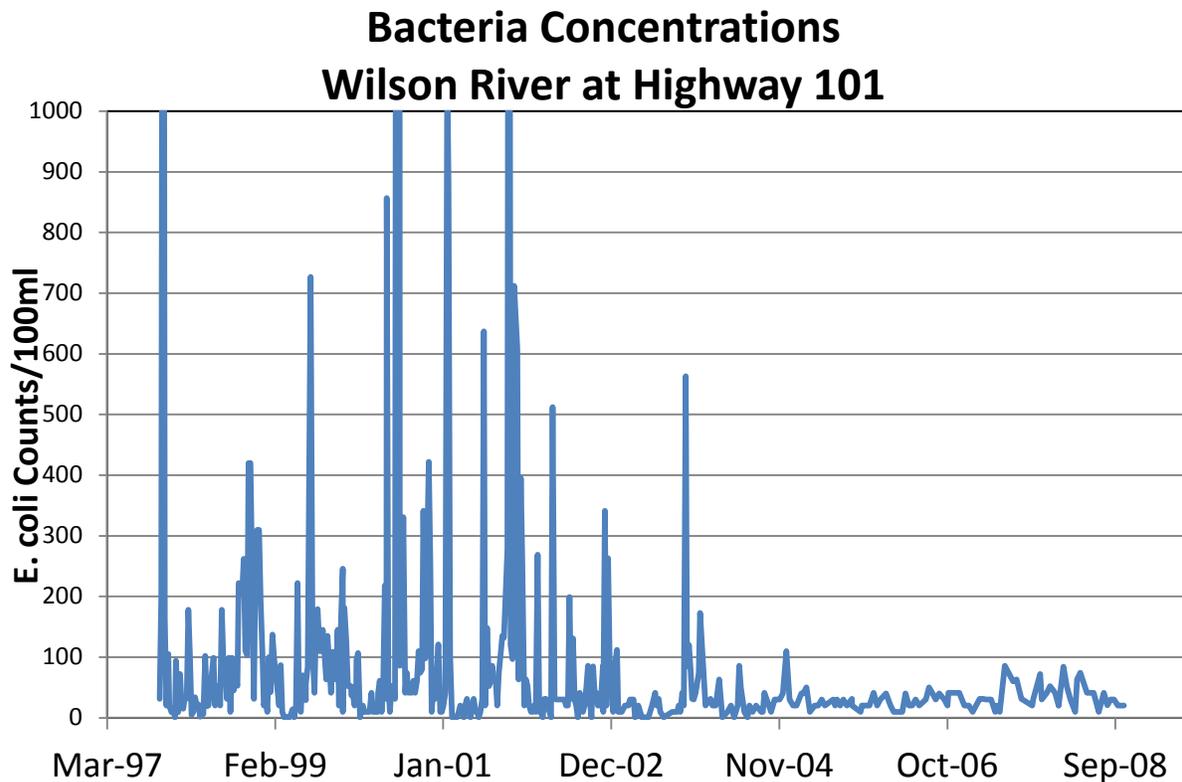


Figure 1: Collaborative monitoring and restoration activities have been shown to be effective. Tillamook basin's Wilson River had a long history of unsafe concentrations of bacteria. Monitoring information brought stakeholders together to address a serious water quality issue and helped them pinpoint the sources of pollution. The conjoined efforts of DEQ, ODA, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, Tillamook County Creamery Association, the SWCD and local producers resulted in dramatic improvements in Wilson River water quality.

More Investment Needed

Greater upfront investment in strategic monitoring and data collection leads to better policy decisions. Agency leadership and stakeholders recognize that Oregon needs to invest more in natural resource monitoring programs to provide the information needed to wisely manage these precious resources, comply with legal mandates, support economic development and achieve public and private interest outcomes. Needs include filling data gaps and making improvements in how we gather, process and share environmental data and information.

Natural resource agencies are approaching the 2013-2015 biennium understanding the need for smart investment and demonstrating an Enterprise Monitoring approach. To be successful, we must have an integrated monitoring plan that will support the right decisions around natural resources and their beneficial uses.